

## Today's News - Wednesday, September 8, 2010

- An in-depth look at how some beleaguered cities are poised to make a comeback: instead of worrying about smart growth, planners are starting to think about smart shrinking, and how to create cities that are healthier because they are smaller.
- An in-depth look at how urban farming is "pushing designers to go beyond their level of expertise," and how some cities are really getting behind the movement (though not all are convinced).
- Greater Kuala Lumpur has a much bigger plan with the "aim to be the best contemporary tropical design city in the world."
- A geographer puts the BP oil spill "into the broader cultural and environmental contexts of New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, describing a complex history of third coast exceptionalism" and the price both are paying.
- Zandberg is saddened by Tel Aviv's "secret garden nestled into the urban fabric," now "brought low" by new, "efficient" passageways.
- Berg on Burning Man's Metropolis theme: "the urbanist discourse and its impact on actual cities and communities beyond the event - is likely to continue" (great pix, too!).
- ASLA offers a newly expanded Designing Our Future: Sustainable Landscapes website featuring new case studies that range from multi-acre parks to an urban rooftop farm.
- Sinclair's secret to Architecture for Humanity's success? "Never underestimate the power of well-meaning people to disappoint you...never underestimate the power of strangers to amaze you."
- Rochon is more than a bit disappointed in the Toronto International Film Festival's new HQ: "What could have been released as a summer blockbuster of epic, original architecture turns out to be barely alive" (though "it's got some cool interiors").
- Iovine on museums sprouting wings by two architects "respectfully updating popular designs from a bygone era"; and Stirling to shine at the Yale Center for British Art.
- Broadway's reborn Belasco Theater leaves Isherwood "with a little bit of plaster dust on my shoes and a major dose of stardust on the brain."
- Two FLW textile-block homes languish on the market, despite deep price cuts; maybe relocation a solution? (fab slide show!)
- 360 Architecture tapped for two California stadiums (even though one doesn't have a location - yet).
- Five finalists teams make up an impressive shortlist for the ARC International Wildlife Crossing Infrastructure Design Competition.
- Call for entries: 2011 Record Houses Awards.

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**How to shrink a city:** Not every great metropolis is going to make a comeback. Planners consider some radical ways to embrace decline...After decades of worrying about smart growth, they're starting to think about smart shrinking, about how to create cities that are healthier because they are smaller...an opportunity to rethink what makes a city a city... -- Daniel D'Oca/Interboro Partners; Joseph Schilling; Terry Schwarz/Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative; Dan Pitera; Roberta Brandes Gratz - Boston Globe

**Down (Town) on the Farm:** Urban farming entrepreneurs spread their seeds...pushing designers to go beyond their level of expertise, and in turn are creating demand for new technologies and tools..."More synergy is needed between architects, engineers and farmers if we're going to develop economically viable projects." -- Living Building Challenge; Virtually Green; Weber Thompson; Dickson Despommier; Mithun - Sustainable Industries Journal

**A metropolis with best of all worlds:** ...the nation has a new game plan of being a focal point for global citizens and possible migrants...10-year-plan...to lodge Greater Kuala Lumpur...in the list of 20 top metropolises...should aim to be the best contemporary tropical design city in the world... -- Boon Che Wee/Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM); Mohd Kamaludin Adam - The Straits Times (Singapore)

**New Fuel for an Old Narrative:** Notes on the BP Oil Disaster: Tulane University geographer Richard Campanella...puts this latest disaster into the broader cultural and environmental contexts of New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, describing a complex history of third coast exceptionalism, of a city and region that are paying a disproportionate price for the nation's hunger for oil.- Places Journal

**Paradise lost:** Tel Aviv's multilayered Gan Yaakov was a secret garden nestled into the urban fabric. Now it has been brought low by the need for quicker access between the city's main thoroughfares...the park finds itself engaged in a mighty struggle with the monsters of architectural glory that have popped up in its face, without having any suitable means of defense. By Esther Zandberg -- Yaakov Rechter/Avraham Karavan/Mordechai Duchovny (1964); Lital Smok Fabian/TMA- Ha'aretz (Israel)

**Urbanist Thinking at the Temporary Metropolis of Burning Man:** The good thing about this year's Metropolis theme is that the urbanist discourse...and its impact on actual cities and communities beyond the event - is likely to continue. By Nate Berg [images, links] - PLANetizen

**Designing Our Future:** A new expanded version of ASLA's "Designing Our Future: Sustainable Landscapes" online exhibition highlights real-life examples of sustainable landscape design and its positive effects on the environment and quality of life. [links] - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

**Is Optimism Infectious?** The global economy is bouncing along a rough bottom, but Cameron Sinclair's non-profit Architecture for Humanity is growing. What's the secret of social-driven success? ..."Never underestimate the power of well-meaning people to disappoint you...never underestimate the power of strangers to amaze you." -- Open Architecture Network - Sustainable Industries Journal

**King Kong comes to King and John:** It's got some cool interiors, but in its delicate downtown hood the TIFF Bell Lightbox comes across as very tall and vaguely menacing...An architectural snore...What could have been released as a summer blockbuster of epic, original architecture turns out to be barely alive. By Lisa Rochon -- KPMB Architects - Globe and Mail (Canada)

**Museums Sprout Wings:** Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum reveal the two architects' skill at respectfully updating popular designs from a bygone era...The past is also present in an exhibition exploring the archives and complicated legacy of James Stirling at the Yale Center for British Art. By Julie V. Iovine -- Foster + Partners; Renzo Piano [images] - Wall Street Journal

**A Temple of Drama, Burnished:** The Belasco Theater, a Broadway house known for its relative intimacy and its subtly gothic ambience, has been restored to its original grandeur...After touring the refurbished house...I came away with a little bit of plaster dust on my shoes and a major dose of stardust on the brain. By Charles Isherwood -- George Keister (1907); Francesca Russo Architect [slide show] - New York Times

**Dramatic, historic and prices slashed, yet no buyers are biting:** For sale signs are out on two of four textile-block homes built by Frank Lloyd Wright, but both are languishing on the market [La Miniatura/Millard House and Ennis House]...we have to consider all options. We moved the London Bridge to the Colorado River. Why couldn't we move this house to Japan?" [slide show] - Los Angeles Times

A's hire architect for proposed San Jose stadium: Oakland Athletics haven't received permission to move anywhere, but that hasn't stopped the team's owner from hiring an architect for a new ballpark in San Jose..."We just want to be ahead of the curve. This architecture firm is one of the best, and we want to make sure they're committed to us." -- 360 Architecture- San Francisco Chronicle

ARC International Wildlife Crossing Infrastructure Design Competition: 5 finalist teams to compete on a wildlife overpass at West Vail Pass, I-70, Colorado -- Balmori Associates/StudioMDA/Knippers Helbig/David Skelly/CITA/Bluegreen/John A. Martin & Associates/David Langdon; Olin Studio/Explorations Architecture/Buro Happold/Applied Ecological Services; Janet Rosenberg & Associates/Blackwell Bowick Partnership/Dougan & Associates/Ekokare International; Michael Van Valkenburgh/HNTB/Applied Ecological Services; Zwarts & Jantsma Architects/OKRA Landscape Architects/IV-Infra/Planecologie- Western Transportation Institute/Montana State University / Woodcock Foundation

Call for entries: 2011 Record Houses awards: open to any architect registered in the U.S. or abroad; deadline: October 29- Architectural Record



-- OMA/Office for Metropolitan Architecture: The Fondaco dei Tedeschi, Venice, Italy  
-- Exhibition: "Re-loved" - Chris Bosse/LAVA, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, Australia  
-- Paul Andreu Architecte: National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing, China

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